

# Briefing in a minute

November 2015

## Private Fostering

Private fostering is an arrangement made between a child's parent and the private foster carer. Private fostering occurs when a child or young person under 16 (under 18 years if disabled), is cared for and provided with accommodation for more than 28 days, by an adult who is not a close relative.

The Children Act 1989 defines 'close relative' in relation to a child as a grandparent, brother, sister, uncle or aunt. They could be a full or half relation, and could be related by Marriage. A step-parent would also be included. A cohabitee of the mother or father would **not** qualify as a relative; neither would extended family such as a great aunt/uncle or parent's cousin.

## Examples of Private Fostering

- Teenager living with a friend's family because of difficulties with his or her own family
- Children living with a parent's unmarried partner when the parent leaves the home (for example is imprisoned)
- Children who are sent to this country for education or health care while their parents remain abroad
- Children at boarding schools who stay with a guardian during the summer holiday

## What do I need to do?

If you know or recognise that a child is being privately fostered, encourage the parent or carer of the child to notify Newcastle's Children's Social Care Services. You should follow this action up by notifying them yourself. Without notification Children's Social Care is unable to check whether the child is being adequately cared for.

## For further information or to make a referral contact

Children's Social Care, Initial Response Service 0191 2772500

NSCB website: [http://newcastlescb.proceduresonline.com/chapters/p\\_pri\\_foster.html](http://newcastlescb.proceduresonline.com/chapters/p_pri_foster.html)